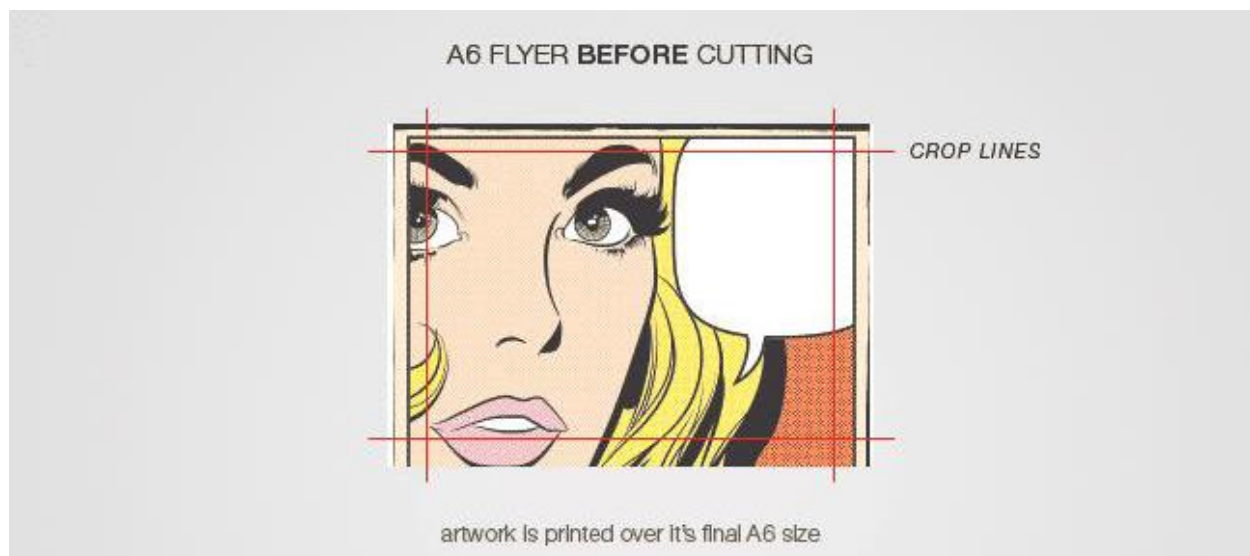


PRINT JARGON BUSTING – BLEED

A common issue with printing can be when artwork is supplied without bleed. Bleed is a term used when the background colour or an image needs to be printed right to edge of a document. At Print and Mail Runner we are dedicated and determined to making ordering print as easy and straight forward as possible. The following information should help you understand the concept of bleed for printing what exactly it means and why it is needed. We will also explain how to add bleed to a document you have designed.

What is bleed and why is it required?

When graphics, pictures or background continue to the edge of a sheet of paper bleed is required. This is because a commercial printing press cannot print exactly to the edge of a single piece of paper. Instead multiple products or items are printed on much larger sheets of paper (SRA 3, 2 or 1) and then cut down to the finished / required size. Because it is impossible to cut exactly to the edge of your design a little 'over print' on each side is required. This over print is called '**bleed**'. Any document that is being professionally printed will require a bleed area and a safe zone providing the print runs to the edge of the document. The diagram below shows a correctly lined up A6 flyer with 3mm of bleed and crop marks. The crop marks show the line that the guillotine must cut to. The bleed is the area outside of these marks.



How much bleed do I need?

The industry standard is to have 3mm of bleed on each edge and a 3mm safe zone inside. This means that the length of each side (height and width) will be 6mm longer. For example, an A4 sheet when lined up correctly with bleed will be 216mm x 316mm. It will then be cut down to its finished size of 210mm x 297mm. The table provided at the end of this article contains the correct dimensions of most standard documents lined up with a bleed area.



What is a safe zone?

The safe zone is the 3mm inside of the cutting edge in which no text, images or important information should be placed. Any graphics in this area risk being clipped when cutting.

Diagram Showing Bleed and Safe Zone

In the diagram below you will see that the illustration extends to the edge of the bleed area and there is no text in the safe zone. The correctly lined up flyer is displayed on the right-hand side.



Examples of Common Mistakes

The following section shows some common mistakes with setting up bleed as well as methods of correcting them:

1. No bleed area or white bleed area

Problem – The document has no bleed area. Printed 'as is' the document will have random white lines on edges as printing and cutting tolerances cannot be compensated for.

Solution – Extend image into the bleed area or move text in by 3mm to allow for a bleed area.



2. Text is in the bleed area and safe zone

Problem – The document has a bleed area and safe zone however there is text inside the bleed area and safe zone. If cut 'as is' text outside safe zone is likely to be cut off.

Solution – Move text inward by 6mm (3mm bleed area and 3mm for safe zone).



3. Text is in the safe zone

Problem – The document has a bleed area and safe zone however there is text inside the safe zone. If printed 'as is' the text in the safe zone could be cut off or clipped.

Solution – Move text inward by 3mm.



4. The bleed area is a different colour to the edge of the design

Problem – The document has bleed area however it is not a continuation of the background design, it is instead a mustard yellow. If printed there are likely to be random yellow lines on the edges of the finished product.

Solution – Make the bleed area a continuation of the background design.



5. Object touching the cutting line does not extend to the edge of the bleed

Problem – The terracotta coloured box containing the text touches the cutting line but does not extend to the edge of the bleed area. If printed 'as is' there could be random blue lines along the edge of the box.

Solution – Either extend the terracotta box to the edge of the bleed area or move the box so its edge sits within the safe zone.



6. Object is halfway between the cutting line and safe zone line

Problem – The terracotta coloured box extends halfway between the cutting line and safe zone line. If printed as is the box may touch the edge on some flyers and not on others.

Solution – Either extend the terracotta box to the edge of the bleed area or move the box so its edge sits within the safe zone.



7. The object does not fully extend to the edge of the bleed area

Problem – Much like the above issue, the terracotta box containing the text does not extend to the edge of the bleed area. If cut 'as is' some flyers may appear with a thin blue line at the edge of the terracotta box.

Solution – Either extend the terracotta box to the edge of the bleed area or move the box so its edge sits within the safe zone.



8. Not enough bleed

Problem – The design does not have enough bleed area. If cut 'as is' there may be random white lines around the edges of the finished product.

Solution – Either Extend the background image to fill the bleed area or move the text and objects on the document in by 3mm to create more bleed area.





I am unable to correct my document?

If you are unable to correct your document there are two options:

1. Print with a border – We would be able to print your document with a 6mm white border (or any colour you prefer). We use 6mm to ensure even borders on each edge.
2. Have the design professionally rebuilt – a professional graphic designer would be able to create a new design for you with a correct bleed area and safe zone. At Print and Mail Runner we have a design studio who would be happy to provide a quote.

Table showing Sizes and Resolutions

The table below is based on printing a portrait document at 300dpi (dots per inch) which will print at a high quality. It provides a size chart for both leaflets and posters, which will show you the proportional difference in size based on an A4 page (standard paper 297x210mm).

Size Name	Size in mm (without bleed)	Size in pixels 300dpi (without bleed)	Size in mm (with bleed)	Size in pixels 300dpi (with bleed)
Business Card	85 x 55mm	1004 x 650	91 x 61mm	1075 x 720
DL / Comp slip	99 x 210mm	1169 x 2480	105 x 216mm	1240 x 2551
A6	148 x 105mm	1748 x 1240	154 x 111mm	1819 x 1311
A5	210 x 148mm	2480 x 1748	216 x 154mm	2551 x 1819
A4	297 x 210mm	3508 x 2480	303 x 216mm	3579 x 2551
A3	420 x 297mm	4961 x 3605	426 x 303mm	5031 x 3579
A2	594 x 420mm	7016 x 4961	600 x 426mm	7087 x 5031
A1	841 x 594mm	9933 x 7016	847 x 600mm	10004 x 7087
A0	1189 x 841mm	14043 x 9933	1195 x 847mm	14114 x 10004

We can provide a full design service from advising on and fixing artwork issues to make your artwork print ready to a full 'from concept' creative and design service. Our studio is charged out in 15-minute slots, so you only pay for the time you use. And remember the best way to keep design costs to a minimum is to provide as detailed and complete specification of what you require. We will always provide you with an estimate of studio time we reckon a job or project will take prior to starting any work so you are aware of the costs upfront which helps with budgeting and avoids any nasty surprises.

If you would like any further help or advice please do not hesitate to contact us on: **0191 580 2031** or e-mail: hello@pm-runner.co.uk.